

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 15942 191815Z

64

ACTION EA-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0550

INFO AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 15942

E.O. 11652:

TAGS: SK, VS

SUBJECT: A SINGAPORE VIEW OF ASIAN PROBLEM IN "POST-VIETNAM" ERA

1. SINGAPORE CHARGE ABDUL AZIZ TOLD EMBOFF JUNE 18 THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WAS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT ASIAN DEVELOPMENTS FOLLOWING THE FALL OF CAMBODIA AND SVN. HE HAD BEEN REQUESTED BY GOS TO KEEP IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE QUAI CONCERNING DEVELOPMENTS, PARTICULARLY IN NORTH AND SOUTH VIETNAM. GOS CONSIDER THAT FRENCH CONTINUE TO HAVE GOOD CONTACTS IN INDOCHINA AND PERSONNEL CAPABLE OF ACCUMULATING AND EVALUATING INFORMATION. HIS GOVERNMENT DOES NOT, HOWEVER, HAVE GREAT CONFIDENCE IN FRENCH JUDGMENT, WHICH IT CONSIDERS TO BE BASED EXCESSIVELY ON WISHFUL THINKING. AZIZ COMMENTED THAT GOF COULD AFFORD BECAUSE OF THE DISTANCE BETWEEN PARIS AND HANOI TO VIEW DEVELOPMENTS WITH ROSY SPECTACLES; GOF AS A CLOSE NEIGHBOR HAD TO BE MORE SOBER.

2. CONTRARY TO THE ESTIMATE OF FRENCH CAPABILITIES, AZIZ FOUND THAT IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT TO GET HARD
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PAGE 02 PARIS 15942 191815Z

INFORMATION FROM THE GOF. THE QUAI CONTINUED TO TALK

PRIMARILY IN GENERALITIES, THE FACTUAL SUPPORT FOR WHICH THE FRENCH DID NOT RELEASE. HE WOULD CONTINUE TO ATTEMPT TO GET INFORMATION FROM THE FRENCH, BUT THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE NO SUBSTITUTE FOR INFORMATION PREVIOUSLY GIVEN TO GOS BY US.

3. AS PART OF GOS MORE REALISTIC APPROACH TOWARD INDOCHINA, GOS HAD TAKEN ISSUE WITH MALAYSIAN EFFORTS WITHIN ASEAN TO SUPPORT IMMEDIATE ACCEPTANCE OF VIETNAMESE DEMANDS IN ORDER TO OBTAIN EARLY RECOGNITION. AZIZ SAID GOS CONSIDERED THAT PRG, AS NEW POWER ON THE ASIAN SCENE, SHOULD REQUEST RECOGNITION AND HENCE ACCEPT BASIC POSITIONS OF "ESTABLISHED POWERS". AZIZ SAID HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE WITH THIS POLICY, AND IT EXPECTED TO REMAIN THE OBJECT OF VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST ATTACKS.

4. AZIZ SAID HANOI SEEMED CLEARLY TO BE PREPARING FOR A ROLE OF PATRON FOR "REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS" ELSEWHERE IN SEA. HANOI AMBITIONS MIGHT CONFLICT WITH THOSE OF THE PRC, BUT IT WAS TOO EARLY FOR GOVERNMENTS LIKE GOS TO DECIDE HOW THEY COULD PLAY WITH DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COMMUNIST MOVEMENTS. AZIZ COMMENTED THAT THE PRINCIPAL SEA CONCERN WAS CAUSED BY UNCERTAINTY ABOUT THE KIND OF ROLE WHICH THE U.S. MIGHT CONTINUE TO PLAY IN SEA. GOS WAS OPERATING ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT IT WOULD BE MUCH LESS THAN THE ROLE PRIOR TO COLLAPSE OF SVN, BUT IT WAS NOT CLEAR HOW MUCH LESS.

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